

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AGRE-00 USIA-15 AID-05 EB-07 AF-10 ARA-10
EA-09 EUR-12 NEA-10 COME-00 ISO-00 TRSE-00 OIC-02
IOE-00 SP-02 L-03 H-02 /101 W
-----181218Z 060206 /44

P 181035Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4681

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 8094

FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UNWFC, FAO
SUBJECT: REPORT OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL PREPARATORY MEETING,
ROME, MAY 9-13, 1977

REF: (A) ROME 7950 (B) ROME 8076

1. WORLD FOOD COUNCIL SECRETARIAT HAS INCREASED THE NUMBER OF ADDENDA FROM 8 TO 10 TO COMPLETE THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL MANILA MINISTERIAL. ADD. 9 ON DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING AND ADD. 10 ON ADOPTION OF THE REPORT WILL BE TRANSMITTED LATER TODAY, MAY 18. COMMENTS ARE STILL EXPECTED BY MAY 22.

2. TEXT OF WFC/L.19/ADD.8 ON FOOD AID FOLLOWS. BEGIN TEXT:

89. THE PREPARATORY MEETING CONSIDERED THE ISSUE OF FOOD AID IN LIGHT OF SECRETARIAT DOCUMENT WFC/38. THE DOCUMENT NOTED THAT FOOD AID HAD RECOVERED SINCE ITS LOW POINT IN 1973/74, AND HAD FLUCTUATED BETWEEN 7 AND 8.3 MILLION TONS SINCE THEN. IT LACKED FORWARD-PLANNING AND WAS BELOW THE 10 MILLION TON LEVEL CALLED FOR BY THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE.

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A GREATER PROPORTION OF FOOD AID HAD RECENTLY GONE TO MSA COUNTRIES, HOWEVER, THAN WAS THE CASE BEFORE THE FOOD CRISIS.

90. THE COUNCIL, AT ITS SECOND SESSION, HAD RECOMMENDED TO THE CFA THAT IT DEVELOP AN IMPROVED POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD AID. ACTION BY CFA AT ITS SECOND SESSION WAS A BEGINNING IN THIS DIRECTION, BUT A MUCH GREATER EFFORT WAS NEEDED IF FOOD AID

WAS TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN IMPROVING NUTRITION, FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AND IN IMPROVING LOCAL FOOD SECURITY IN MSA COUNTRIES.

91. THE DOCUMENT ALSO NOTED THAT THE INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY RESERVE OF 500,000 TONS OF CEREALS TO STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF THE WFP TO DEAL WITH CRISIS SITUATIONS, CALLED FOR BY THE SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND ENDORSED IN ITS MODALITIES BY THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CFA, HAD REACHED ONLY 92,000 TONS IN 1976.

92. THE DOCUMENT THEREFORE STRESSED THAT A MUCH MORE SERIOUS CONCERN WAS NEEDED BY THE COUNCIL ON FOOD AID ISSUES. IT URGED THAT FOOD AID CONTRIBUTIONS BE INCREASED TO 10 MILLION TONS OF GRAINS ON A FORWARD-PLANNING BASIS; THAT DONOR COUNTRIES INDICATE THEIR FOOD AID CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 1977/78 AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY RESERVE OF 500,000 TONS BEFORE THE END OF 1977; THAT THE 10 MILLION TARGET BE INCORPORATED IN A NEW FOOD AID CONVENTION AND A LARGER PROPORTION BE CHANNELLED THROUGH WFP; AND THAT THE COMMITTEE ON FOOD AID POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES (CFA) INTENSIFY AND GIVE PRIORITY TO ITS EFFORTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IMPROVED POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD AID WHICH WOULD INCLUDE GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR EMERGENCY FOOD AID AS WELL AS EXPANDED AND IMPROVED FOOD AID PROGRAMMES TO ADVANCE FOOD PRODUCTION AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY AND TO DIRECTLY AUGMENT FOOD SUPPLIES FOR MALNOURISHED PEOPLE, ENSURING THAT FOOD AID DOES NOT RETARD EFFORTS TO INCREASE FOOD PRODUCTION IN RECIPIENT COUNTRIES OR DISTORT COMMERCIAL TRADE FLOWS.

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93. THE PREPARATORY MEETING SUPPORTED THE OBJECTIVES OF DIRECTING FOOD AID TOWARDS PROVIDING EMERGENCY RELIEF, INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION, ADVANCING DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT, AND IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. IT NOTED THAT WHILE FOOD AID HAD BEEN PROVIDED IN THE PAST MAINLY TO MEET CURRENT CONSUMPTION REQUIREMENTS, PRIORITY MUST NOW BE GIVEN TO THE OBJECTIVE OF ADVANCING NUTRITION AND DEVELOPMENT. DELEGATES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ALSO LAID STRESS ON GREATER USE OF FOOD AID FOR FOOD SECURITY AND HELPING COUNTRIES TO BUILD FOOD STOCKS AND NEEDED PHYSICAL FACILITIES SUCH AS STORAGE, TRANSPORT AND OTHER NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE. THE MEETING EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR PROMOTING MEASURES TO REDUCE FOOD LOSSES. SOME DELEGATIONS CAUTIONED THAT FOOD AID SHOULD BE USED FOR INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION, SINCE THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION TO THE FOOD PROBLEM OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES LAY IN THE EXPANSION OF THEIR FOOD PRODUCTION. FOOD AID WAS THEREFORE AN INTERIM MEASURE.

94. THE MEETING SUPPORTED THE DISTINCTION MADE IN THE DOCUMENT BETWEEN FOOD AID NEEDED FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF (A "VARIABLE" ELEMENT) AND FOR DEVELOPMENT, NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY (A "STABLE" ELEMENT). ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF WOULD BE FLEXIBLE AND SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BY A RESERVE. THE NEED FOR FOOD AID FOR DEVELOPMENT AND NUTRITION PROGRAMMES WAS MORE STABLE AND SHOULD BE CLOSELY INTEGRATED WITH DEVELOPMENT PLANS OF RECIPIENT COUNTRIES.

95. DEVELOPING COUNTRIES STRESSED THAT DONOR COUNTRIES SHOULD RAISE FOOD AID ALLOCATIONS TO ACHIEVE THE MINIMUM ANNUAL TARGET OF 10 MILLION TONS FOR CEREALS DURING 1977/78 RECOMMENDED BY THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE, AND THAT THIS LEVEL SHOULD BE SURPASSED DURING 1978/79. THEY ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE TARGET SHOULD BE RAISED SINCE FOOD IMPORT REQUIREMENTS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAD INCREASED COMPARED TO THOSE...

(MORE COMING)

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EA-09 EUR-12 NEA-10 COME-00 ISO-00 TRSE-00 OIC-02

IOE-00 SP-02 L-03 H-02 /101 W

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P 181035Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4682

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 8094

FODAG

THOSE.....

OF THE EARLY SIXTIES AND THE SHARE OF FOOD AID HAD DECLINED BOTH ABSOLUTELY AND RELATIVELY.

96. THE MAJOR FOOD AID DONOR COUNTRIES STRESSED

THAT OTHER COUNTRIES SHOULD ALSO BE URGED TO MAKE FOOD AID ALLOCATIONS MAKING IT THUS MORE FEASIBLE TO REACH THE TARGET. THEY ALSO FELT THAT THERE SEEMED TO BE EXCESSIVE CONCERN FOR TARGET FIXING, WHICH TENDED TO DETRACT ATTENTION FROM THE NEED FOR ENSURING EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF FOOD AID. THE WISDOM OF FIXING TARGETS WITHOUT AN ASSESSMENT OF FOOD AID REQUIREMENTS WAS QUESTIONED AND SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MAKING AID ALLOCATIONS AND FIXING TARGETS. ONE DELEGATE STRESSED THAT IF DONOR COUNTRIES ACHIEVED THE TARGET OF 0.7 PER CENT OF GNP RECOMMENDED FOR OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE THIS WOULD SOLVE MANY PROBLEMS OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND MIGHT REDUCE THE NEED FOR FOOD AID.

97. THE OBSERVER FROM EEC INDICATED THAT THE ANNUAL ALLOCATIONS BY THE COMMUNITY WERE BASED ON AN OBJECTIVE EVALUATION OF COUNTRIES' NEEDS, THE CRITERIA FOR WHICH WERE BASIC FOOD REQUIREMENTS, PER CAPITA INCOME AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS.

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98. DELEGATES FROM DONOR COUNTRIES GENERALLY FAVORED THE IDEA THAT A NEW FOOD AID CONVENTION (FAC) MIGHT BE DEVELOPED AS PART OF A NEW GRAINS AGREEMENT, BUT OPPOSED MAKING THE 10 MILLION TON TARGET PART OF SUCH A CONVENTION, WHICH WOULD HAVE COVERAGE LIMITED TO COUNTRIES THAT BECAME ITS MEMBERS. THEY OPPOSED ANY PREJUDGEMENT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW AGREEMENT, BUT AGREED THAT COUNTRIES MIGHT BE ENCOURAGED TO INCREASE THEIR COMMITMENTS UNDER THE FAC AND THAT A LARGER AMOUNT OF FOOD AID SHOULD BE CHANNELLED THROUGH WFP. SOME DELEGATES EXPRESSED APPRECIATION OF THE ROLE OF WFP IN DISBURSING FOOD AID.

99. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF FORWARD-PLANNING OF FOOD AID. THE DELEGATE OF CANADA INDICATED THAT CANADA HAD ANNOUNCED FOOD AID ALLOCATIONS FOR 3 YEARS AND WOULD TAKE FURTHER DECISIONS IN THIS REGARD IN 1977/78 AFTER THE REVIEW OF ITS FOOD AID PROGRAMME. THE DELEGATE OF THE UNITED STATES INDICATED THAT FORWARD-PLANNING OF FOOD AID WOULD BE FACILITATED UNDER ITS PROPOSED NEW LEGISLATION, AND THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS CONSIDERING PROVIDING FOOD AID ON GRANT BASIS.

100. IT WAS NOTED THAT FORWARD-PLANNING WAS REQUIRED BY BOTH DONOR AND RECIPIENT COUNTRIES AND THAT NATIONAL FOOD PLANS BEING DISCUSSED IN THE CGFPI MIGHT BE OF INTEREST IN THIS CONTEXT. ALSO RECIPIENT COUNTRIES SHOULD ENSURE THAT FOOD AID REACHED THE NEEDY PERSONS FOR WHOM IT WAS INTENDED.

101. THERE WAS GENERAL ACCEPTANCE ON THE NEED FOR EARLY ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY RESERVE OF 500,000 TONS ON THE BASIS OF THE MODALITIES ALREADY AGREED TO.

POTENTIAL DONORS WERE URGED TO INDICATE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RESERVE BEFORE THE END OF 1977. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THE COUNCIL SHOULD PROVIDE A NEW IMPETUS FOR THE CREATION OF THE EMERGENCY RESERVE, BUT THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING OUT NECESSARY MECHANISMS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESERVE WAS ALSO NOTED.

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THE DELEGATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY INDICATED THAT HIS COUNTRY WOULD BE ALLOCATING 30,000 TONS OF GRAIN FOR THE RESERVE THIS YEAR AS THEY HAD DONE LAST YEAR.

102. THE PREPARATORY MEETING AGREED THAT THE CFA SHOULD INTENSIFY ITS EFFORT ON A PRIORITY BASIS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IMPROVED POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD AID. SOME DELEGATIONS EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT IMPROVED POLICY FRAMEWORK WOULD ALSO TAKE ACCOUNT OF SUCH FACTORS AS MARKETING AND LAND REFORM POLICIES AND ABSORPTIVE CAPACITIES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. IT WAS PROPOSED THAT THE IMPROVED FRAMEWORK SHOULD ALSO INDICATE GUIDELINES TO ENSURE PROPER UTILIZATION OF DRY SKIM MILK POWDER IN FOOD AID PROGRAMMES.

103. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF FORWARD PLANNING AND LARGER FOOD AID COMMITMENTS BY DONOR COUNTRIES IN PHYSICAL TERMS SO THAT PRICE FLUCTUATIONS WOULD NOT AFFECT THE SUPPLIES OF FOOD AID. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT IT WOULD BE OF GREAT HELP IF THE NEW FOOD AID CONVENTION INCLUDED LARGER COMMITMENTS, AND A LARGER PROPORTION OF GRAINS MOVED THROUGH WFP. HE FELT ENCOURAGED BY THE EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY RESERVE AND MULTILATERAL CHANNELLING OF FOOD AID.
END TEXT.GARDNER

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Message Attributes

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